

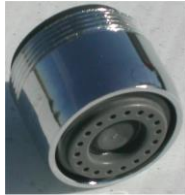
Water Team

Water is central to all religions, symbolizing renewal and cleansing. Life cannot exist without water. However, water shortages, drought and water contamination are very real issues facing communities throughout the world. Consider these facts:

- While we live on the ‘big blue planet’, which is 70% water, only 1% of all the water on earth is suitable to drink.
- The United States uses about 346,000 million gallons of fresh water every day.
- Often we are withdrawing water from our aquifers faster than they can be replenished, as more and more households need water and companies use water in manufacturing.
- The average American home can waste, on average, more than 10,000 gallons of water every year due to running toilets, dripping faucets, and other household leaks. Imagine how much water is wasted at a religious institution if these things happen, given the size of the building!
- Over the course of your lifetime, you will flush the toilet nearly 140,000 times. Toilets installed prior to 1994 can use up to 7 gallons per flush!

To answer these water questions, you will need to tour the bathrooms and kitchens at the house of worship, and observe closely the ways in which water is used. You may also need to ask facilities maintenance personnel.

1. Does the house of worship use faucet-flow restrictors/aerators on sink faucets that are rated at 1.5 gallons per minute or less? Faucet-flow restrictors reduce the amount of water used while maintaining water pressure.



Tips: This is what a faucet flow aerator looks like, and it twists onto the end of a faucet. Most aerators will have the gallons per minute inscribed on the metal nozzle.

2. If applicable, does the congregation use low-flow showerheads rated at 2 gpm or less? These reduce the amount of water used while maintaining water pressure.

3. Does the congregation use a dishwasher or a sanitizing machine in lieu of handwashing? If a dishwasher is used, do they utilize the water saver function?
4. Does the congregation reduce water in their toilets through:
 - Low-flow toilets (1.6 gallons per minute or less)
 - Toilet tank water flow restrictors
 - Waterless urinals

Tips: To see how many gallons the toilets use per flush, look for an inscription behind the seat. Toilet tank flow restrictors are similar to bricks that are placed in the back of toilets to displace water.

Water Sense is the US EPA standard/certification for water-saving products. Ideally, the faucet flow restrictors, showerheads, toilets and urinals should also be Water Sense certified. Do you see the Water Sense label on anything?

5. Does the house of worship serve individual water bottles for events and meals?
6. Are there any leaks that you found in bathrooms or the kitchen?
7. Does the congregation educate members and staff about water conservation practices through signs, articles in the newsletter or other means? Please describe.
8. What is the local watershed, and/or what water source supplies the congregation?
9. Are there any local waterbodies the congregation should take into account with its water management outdoors?
10. What type of de-icer does the congregation use? Consider its implications for local water quality.
11. Talk with the grounds maintenance team. What aspects of wasteful water usage did they find outdoors?

Questions to Answer:

1. Why is it important for congregations to reduce water usage?
2. What are key opportunities in the area of water that you learned about through this audit?
3. What can this house of worship do differently to reduce water usage in their building?